



Delaware Early Childhood Council

DRAFT – January 30, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Delaware State Police Troop 2
100 Lagrange Avenue
Newark, DE 19702

The mission of the DECC is to promote the development of a comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system, birth to eight, which provides the highest quality services and environment for Delaware's children and their families.

DECC Voting Member Attendance:

Madeleine Bayard, Rodel Foundation of Delaware; Dr. Dusty Blakey, Colonial School District; Cheryl Clendaniel, The Learning Center; Heidi Beck, Delaware Head Start Association; Leslie Newman, Children & Families First; Gabriela Kejner, Department of Health & Social Services; Dr. Kimberly Krzanowski, Office of Early Learning; Kelli Thompson, Nemours

Ex-Officio Council Member Attendance: Mary Moor, Division of Public Health and Behavioral Health Services; Martha Buell, University of Delaware; Betty Gail Timm, Office of Child Care Licensing; Ed Freel, University of Delaware

Additional Attendees: Sybil Baker, Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens; Audrey Carey, Indian River School District; Cindy Gibbs, Wilmington Head Start; Daphne Evans, Early Childhood C S; Kathleen Nelson, CPS; Paulina Gyan, Division of Public Health; Lynn Kelley, Children & Families First; Janice Barlow, Kids Count; Michelle Spencer, DEAEYC; Dawn Alexander, Colonial School District; Lori Foraker, Office of Early Learning; Tammy Walls, Colonial School District; Lori-Hurst-Farrell, SBM; Christine Hoeflich-Olley, Sussex Early Childhood Council; Gwen Angalet, GBA Consulting; Diane Frentzel, Delaware Readiness Teams; Terease Berkley, Telamon; Laura Manges, Milford School District; Corinne Dries, Newark Day Nursery; Jane Bowen, Newark Day Nursery; Tina Shockley, Office of Early Learning; Patches Hill, Department of Education; Marcie Pate, Office of Early Learning, Caitlin Gleason, Office of Early Learning, Christina Koutsourades, Office of Early Learning; Aisha Ferrell, Office of Early Learning; Gayle Rutter, Appoquinimink School District; Sharon Pepukayi, Appoquinimink School District; Molly Magarik, Department of Health & Social Services; Mary Hirschbiel, Read Aloud Delaware; Jamie Schneider, EEC; Whitney Williams, Parents as Teachers; Lucinda Ross, St. Michael's School, Cindy Brown, Office of Early Learning; Kristy Sheffler, DE Stars; Jamie Walko, Office of Early Learning Contractor; Tracey Wertz, Office of Early Learning; Jon Sheehan, Governor's Office; Michelle Blankenship, Easter Seals; Toni dickerson, Sussex Preschools; Haley Qaissanee, University of Delaware; Nneka Ibekie, Office of Early Learning; Shay Frisby, Stand By Me; Kyle Herron,

Tender Loving Kare; Kimmy Bran, Tender Loving Kare; Beth Smith, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children; Veronica Commodore, University of Delaware; Noelle Bartkowski, Parents as Teachers; Lisa Miller, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children; Eunice Yoo, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children; Michelle Loatman, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children; Shebra Hall, Department of Health & Social Services; Angela Russo, Concord Preschool 3; Dr. Tanya Robinson, Lake Forest; Linda Zankowsky, University of Delaware; Vickie Wilkerson, Sharon Temple Child Care; Nicole Sturgill, Aspira Academy; Nuekia Maddrey, Delaware Readiness Teams; Kim Brancato, Appoquinimink School District; Marilyn Torres, NDEHS; Donna Snyder-White, Delaware 211; Melanie Thomas Price, A Leap of Faith; Fiamma Rago, Department of Labor; Kristin Dwyer, Delaware State Education Association; Imani Lawson, NDEHS; Michelle Wall, Appoquinimink School District; Libby Heiks, University of Delaware; Rebecca Ryan, Christina Early Education Center

Welcome/Call to Order/Approve Minutes

Madeleine Bayard called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Due to the large audience and new participants, everyone introduced themselves. The [minutes of the November 15, 2018](#) meeting were approved by Cheryl Clendaniel and Leslie Newman, and passed unanimously.

Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor for Governor John Carney spoke about the recently submitted Preschool Development Grant and thanked pertinent staff who worked on it (Dr. Kim Krzanowski, Caitlin Gleason and a lead team). Delaware was awarded a \$4.2 million grant which will allow for coordinated services across the birth to five system, as well as allow for data integration.

It was also noted that the Governor recently gave his State of the State address and Budget address which includes more funding for Delaware Stars (\$3.2 million) and Purchase of Care (POC) (\$3.8 million). The Delaware Stars funding would be used to fund Tiered Reimbursement payments and includes money for program growth. The POC funding would enable the program to potentially catch up to 2015 market rates and allow flexibility for more people to come into the program. Molly Magarik of the Department of Health and Social Services noted that the Division of Social Services (DSS) is talking to their IT vendor about system changes that would be needed, but noted that must first get approved funding from the General Assembly and work through federal requirements of the program. Such funding would allow the market rates to move from 2011 rates to 2015 rates.

The point was made that businesses are struggling and need to close the achievement gap for low-income families. Also, there was a question about whether POC rates would increase to the 2015 market rates in April 2019 if funding is available. DHSS did not think that would be possible because of the many CCDF mandated requirements which have to be funded first. Also the recent federal shutdown has impacted this as well.

Dawn Alexander asked Molly, “Why has DHSS decided not to follow the [CCDF reauthorization recommendation](#) regarding developmental screening, although other states are following this recommendation and are requiring all licensed child care programs that accept child care

subsidy to implement yearly developmental screening and/or partner with local school districts that offer the yearly screening.” Dawn respectfully requested that DHSS move toward implementing this requirement. Molly noted that POC is a workforce quality program, so its purpose is to provide childcare and learning opportunities to children to ensure they are learning while parents are going to work. If we require developmental screenings, we would need a great deal more conversation to implement such a requirement. As a followup, Dawn provided an email to Molly to request additional POC data be relayed to the DECC and its attendees for 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Next, Dr. Krzanowski and Caitlin Gleason gave a [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG B-5\)](#) update. Two key aspects for which the grant will be used are a Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. Additional focus will be given to four key priorities and will involve issue resolution across various sectors and agencies.

Next, Lynn Kelley gave a brief [presentation of Consumer Education Website Overview/Public Campaign](#) (Mychildde.org), which was essentially a summary of the focus group meeting that held on January 15, 2019 to receive feedback on the website, its functionality, etc. She reported that while there was no negative feedback, ideas were given that would improve the clarity of the website. She noted that feedback is still being received and can be submitted by via this [Survey Monkey link](#).

Next, Patches Hill of the Department of Education’s Technology Section provided some insight into his role as data manager for DOE, and how he views data as a whole and with regard to early learning. Since joining the department, Patches has done a needs assessment to determine where we are with data including collection and usage. He is digging deeper and focusing on intentional data collection concerning why and what data do we collect. He is also developing a data strategy, which will be a long-term vision for using data to look at the whole child. Someone asked if this is one big data system or a singular way to share data through the existing system? He noted that he is working to develop a specific early learning data system. He will also be working to determine how a new data system and the existing data system will work together. He is hopeful that the PDG funding will help push some of these initiatives forward. Therefore, he is excited about the future of data systems integration and intends to partner with early learning and early care and education providers, as well as other state agencies to help design DOE’s new data system. He encouraged the group to contact him if they wish to discuss or have any concerns/questions. Patches can be reached or at Patches.Hill@doe.k12.de.us.

Next, Shay Frisby gave a [Stand By Me presentation](#) which outlined who their organization serves as well as their goal of increasing personal economic security through five key activities. Their services are free and they primarily focus on providing parents and employees with financial advice which is accomplished through partnership, relationships and implementation. Their overall priority is on education of financial stability.

Next, Madeleine indicated that we are looking at potentially bringing universal pre-kindergarten to Delaware, in a mixed delivery setting. Kiley Herron, Tender Loving Kare Early Learning Centers, and Madeleine described how the voice of providers has been prominent in the discussion to ensure that community providers are part of the delivery system in

partnership with school districts. A group is working to develop a proposed model with regard to funding, staff qualifications, and how this would impact special education, nursing, screening, and other components. There appears to be a lot of interest in doing this, and she noted that early learning providers are well represented and very much in the conversation. This is important because half of 3-4 year olds are not in a child care setting. Dr. Dusty Blakey, who represents the Chief School Officers Association noted that preschool is a priority for school districts, and working with child care providers is especially important as they set the foundation for children. He stressed the importance and priority (of the school districts willingness) of partnering with early learning providers and the Delaware Readiness Teams to provide educational services to those underserved and unserved 3-4 year olds. He noted that superintendents are going to work together with providers, not competitively, for funding as this will overall benefit children as they move from child care to a pre-K and then to school.

Next, Diane Frentzel gave a [presentation/update on the Delaware Readiness Teams](#) (DRT) and an update on the Kindergarten Registration Campaign. She reiterated the goal of the DRT is to have children enter kindergarten ready to learn. She indicated that the DRT is focusing on Kindergarten Readiness/Registration Campaign, developmental screening initiative, and family empowerment initiative. Over 500 volunteers, 19 readiness teams and thousands of families are joining the effort, and they reached over 20,000 people in 2018. She reminded everyone about the Kindergarten Information Folders that they are using to spread the word about registering children for kindergarten.

She also advised and encouraged participation in the pre-kindergarten survey that is underway right now. Everyone is encouraged to submit their feedback by taking the pre-kindergarten survey in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) by February 15.

She introduced First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney who reiterated the successfulness of the events and gave kudos to Diane and her team. She also spoke briefly about her First Chance Delaware initiative, and encouraged the audience to think about food insecurity and trauma and how they affect children in school.

Next, Belvie Herbert of Division of Social Services spoke briefly about the Council's recommended Quality Spending Proposal. She indicated that the Division of Social Services has put the request on hold indefinitely because they must first address the child care copayment rate design and graduated phase out. Likewise, they have to address CCDF mandated initiatives such as upgrades to their computer system, and these items are taking additional money.

She also spoke about additional parent fees/copays. She said stakeholders met with POC providers to discuss additional fees that providers want to charge POC families. Currently they can charge for things like field trips, late pick up fees, etc. Providers want to start charging for technological upgrades to centers or for the ability to have families pay by credit card. We are in discussions about how we can balance it out. However, we as an agency must ensure equal access for all, must quantify the additional fees, monitor and report out on it. Therefore, we have to work through some things before we can allow for these additional fees to be charged to POC families.

Next, Dr. Kim Krzanowski gave a staffing update on the Office of Early Learning. She noted that Lori Foraker has been hired as administrative support for the EHS-CCP work and that Tracey Wertz will be the administrative support for the 619 programs and general administrative support to OEL. She further noted that there is still a vacancy with Delaware First position which we hope to be able to fill soon.

She also gave a quick QRIS Redesign Update, noting that we are reviewing recent feedback and are looking to see what other states are doing with their QRIS. We are specifically looking at POC and the De Stars five star system. A Request for Proposals is out for a consultant until 2/12/19. This person will lead the work developing QRIS standards. She advised that the DECC group will have the opportunity to provide feedback on QRIS standards. We are still looking to FY21 to have new standards in place, and will be piloting the new QRIS with programs at some point before then.

She also noted that we are working on plans for the 2019 Early Learning Community Conversations for April/May. She encouraged everyone's attendance and feedback.

Next, Madeleine noted that the upcoming subcommittee meetings were listed on the agenda. It was noted that the Data & Policy Subcommittee is looking at kindergarten registration data as well as looking at universal pre-kindergarten. It was noted that they also have the DE-ELS survey and that data has not changed much. Here is the recent [DE-ELS survey comparison charts](#) for your information.

It was noted that the Healthy Young Children and Families Subcommittee will meet March 7 from 1-3pm at the Children & Families First Dover office.

Next, Cindy Brown, Kim Brancato and Jamie Walko talked about an Inclusion Self-Assessment update. They also talked about the Early Childhood Inclusion Committee (formerly EIEIO) as a subcommittee, which is dedicated to quality inclusive early childhood programs and services. They are looking for committee members and note their monthly meetings are posted on the OEL website for anyone who wants to attend. Some of the items they are working on are an Inclusion Guide and training, as well as preschool finance inclusion tool kit. They also provided a [Early Childhood Inclusion Committee brochure](#) on their committee and hope to present a more detailed presentation at the next DECC meeting.

It was asked what Inclusion really means. Cindy noted that inclusion is the process by which a student with disabilities, who has an IEP, is in a classroom where at least 50% of classmates are developing appropriately.

Next, it was noted that the Early Learning Providers and Workforce subcommittee has met to discuss POC fees and what centers are charging families. Also, an Early Childhood Expo is being planned for spring 2020, which we hope will get high school students interested in working in the field.

Next, Fiamma Rago of the Department of Labor gave a [presentation on apprenticeship](#). These are earn as you learn opportunities, specifically for those child care apprentices. She noted

they are currently working with the Workforce Subcommittee and higher education partners and are piloting apprenticeships, which will also help to determine what future needs are in this field.

Next, a couple of community updates were presented. The first was a reminder about [Delaware Advocacy Day](#) which will occur as part of the May 8, 2019 DECC meeting. This will also be a day when Delaware Readiness Teams holds their meeting from 10am to 11:30 am, lunch will be provided at 11:30 am, and we will have a shortened DECC meeting from 11:45-12:45. Michelle Shaivitz encouraged everyone to pick up cards to send to their legislators to advocate for early learning prior to this day. Cards are available from Michelle Spencer at mspencer@deaeyc.org. Second, Martha Buell noted that the Partnership for Public Education has a [policy brief](#) on the importance of high quality early care and education for children and families.

Lastly, it was noted that the Making a Difference Conference will be held on April 5-6, 2019 and registration for the conference opens on February 11, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.